





4
CONDITION OF A CHURCH MILITANT.

A CHARGE,

DELIVERED AT THE

ANNUAL VISITATION OF THE DIOCESE OF DUBLIN,

IN THE

CATHEDRAL OF CHRIST-CHURCH, DUBLIN,

16th June, 1863.

By RICHARD WHATELY, D.D.

ARCHBISHOP OF DUBLIN.

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W. W. Hull

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(1) $(\mathbb{Z}/m\mathbb{Z})^\times \cong \mathbb{Z}/\phi(m)\mathbb{Z}$

Let $m \in \mathbb{N}$.

1. If m is prime, then $(\mathbb{Z}/m\mathbb{Z})^\times \cong \mathbb{Z}/(m-1)\mathbb{Z}$.
2. If $m = p^k$ for p prime and $k \geq 1$, then $(\mathbb{Z}/m\mathbb{Z})^\times \cong \mathbb{Z}/\phi(m)\mathbb{Z}$.
3. If $m = 2^k$ for $k \geq 3$, then $(\mathbb{Z}/m\mathbb{Z})^\times \cong \mathbb{Z}/2\mathbb{Z} \times \mathbb{Z}/2^{k-2}\mathbb{Z}$.
4. If m is squarefree, then $(\mathbb{Z}/m\mathbb{Z})^\times \cong \prod_{p|m} (\mathbb{Z}/p\mathbb{Z})^\times$.
5. If m is not squarefree, then $(\mathbb{Z}/m\mathbb{Z})^\times \not\cong \prod_{p|m} (\mathbb{Z}/p\mathbb{Z})^\times$.
6. If m is even, then $(\mathbb{Z}/m\mathbb{Z})^\times \not\cong \mathbb{Z}/\phi(m)\mathbb{Z}$.
7. If m is odd, then $(\mathbb{Z}/m\mathbb{Z})^\times \cong \mathbb{Z}/\phi(m)\mathbb{Z}$.
8. If m is a power of 2, then $(\mathbb{Z}/m\mathbb{Z})^\times \cong \mathbb{Z}/2\mathbb{Z} \times \mathbb{Z}/2^{k-2}\mathbb{Z}$.
9. If m is a power of an odd prime, then $(\mathbb{Z}/m\mathbb{Z})^\times \cong \mathbb{Z}/\phi(m)\mathbb{Z}$.
10. If m is a product of two distinct primes, then $(\mathbb{Z}/m\mathbb{Z})^\times \cong \mathbb{Z}/\phi(m)\mathbb{Z}$.

A CHARGE,

ETC.

§ 1. ONE may sometimes hear the remark made, that an Episcopal Charge usually refers to some new and peculiar difficulties and dangers, to which either our own Church in particular, or Christianity in general, is, at the time, especially exposed. And some are thence perhaps led to consider the Church's rulers as somewhat of the character of alarmists; exaggerating grievances, or apprehending imaginary dangers. But in truth, difficulties and dangers will always beset the Church Militant here on Earth, till it shall become the Church Triumphant in Heaven: and though these are not necessarily greater at each successive period than formerly, yet they call for special attention, as being, in general, somewhat different in form from those that have been before encountered. The Sea is in many places making encroachments on the land, not greater perhaps than

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in past ages, but in fresh places, so as to require fresh embankments to resist devastation; the ancient sea-walls being no longer serviceable. And there is something analogous to this in the perils and difficulties which beset the Church. If not absolutely greater than formerly, they will perhaps have something of novelty in kind.

To take one example of this: In the last and in preceding generations, all, or nearly all, of those who denied the truth of our Scriptures, avowed themselves adverse to Christianity; but now, a very large proportion of them profess themselves Christians; though the Christianity which they profess is something far more remote from what is commonly understood by the word, than the religion of the Jews, or of the Mahometans.*

* As a sample of the doctrine alluded to, I subjoin a passage from an author in some repute with a certain school:—

“The true Christianity—a faith like Christ’s in the infinitude of Man—is lost. None believeth in the soul of Man, but only in some man or person old and departed! In how many Churches, and by how many prophets, tell me, is Man made sensible that he is an infinite soul; that the earth and heavens are passing into his mind; and that he is drinking for ever the soul of God!

“The very word Miracle, as pronounced by christian Churches, gives a false impression; it is a monster; it is not one with the blowing clover and the falling rain. . . . Man’s life is a miracle, and all that Man doth. . . . A true conversion, a true Christ, is now, as always, to be made by the reception of beautiful sentiments. The gift of God to the soul is not a vaunting, overpowering, excluding sanctity, but a sweet, natural goodness like thine and mine, and that thus invites thine and mine to be, and to grow.”

Yet those who hold this doctrine would not scruple to make that declaration, “on the true faith of a Christian,” to which some have attached such vast importance.

§ 2. In taking measures for guarding against any dangers we may be exposed to, it is perhaps the wisest *Dangers from unwise friends.* course to look out, in the first instance, for any errors that may have been committed by injudicious defenders. To point out, and to dwell upon such errors, may be less acceptable perhaps, but is more profitable than to advert exclusively to the faults of opponents. Errors on our own side are both the more likely to be overlooked by us, and also the more likely to damage our cause. Any error on this side, even though small in itself, may lead to important results;—sometimes *directly*, and sometimes *indirectly*: *directly*, when some false principle is applied more extensively than was expected by those who first laid it down; or again, when some doctrine which has a foundation in truth, is so mis-stated, exaggerated, or misapplied, as to become dangerously false. And, *indirectly*, any error, in principle or in practice, may lead to great and unforeseen results by creating a dangerous *re-action*. For, it is a true and trite remark, that the generality of Mankind are prone to rush from one extreme to its opposite, and to mistake reverse of wrong for right.

Not only, however, is this truth frequently in practice overlooked, but there are some who, though admitting, generally, that re-action may occasionally be apprehended, are accustomed to

deny it in each individual instance. And there are some who triumphantly urge the undeniable truth, that an entire series of evils cannot *all* have originated in re-action. And this indeed, is as obvious as that the initiatory motion of a pendulum must have been caused by some external impulse. But when once set in motion, it may long continue to oscillate. And in like manner, Mankind may often be found to vibrate, as it were, from one extreme to the opposite.

Misapplication of just principles. § 3. We may take as an instance of the misapplication of a just principle, the injudicious advocacy which is now prevalent, of the doctrine of *Toleration*. It is a doctrine perfectly right in itself; i.e. No one ought to be liable to secular penalties for conscientious religious error: but this doctrine may be, and has been of late, so misapplied, as to justify the conduct of one who retains office in a Church, (be it a sound or an erroneous Church) to whose doctrines he is opposed. And with this conduct some are justly chargeable, even of those who the most loudly condemn it in others whose opinions differ from their own.

And I cannot but strongly suspect that the remarkable prevalence in the present day, of this misdirection of the principle of toleration, is to be traced, in some measure, to such a re-action as I have just now adverted to. The persecution, on two occasions, some years ago, raised against a

Divinity-professor, who was most unjustifiably assailed, and condemned unheard, on charges which were plainly proved to be a mere pretext,* produced before long a strong and indignant sympathy, such as has been since extended to cases to which no such sympathy was due. For, the greater part of Mankind are apt to overlook distinctions, perhaps very important, between cases that have something in common. There cannot therefore, I think, be a doubt that we are now feeling some of the effects of what then took place. Besides the intrinsic and immediate evil of an unjust act, those who were clear-sighted foresaw with dread the lasting discredit, and consequent danger, which the Church itself would thence incur. The spectacle of a number of the Clergy of our Church, combining to hunt down most unfairly an individual obnoxious to them, created naturally, however unreasonably, a distrust of the Ecclesiastical Body generally, and a disposition to consider any one exposed to our censure, as the victim of persecuting bigotry.

§ 4. One of the instances of a dangerous reaction, produced by an error which some might consider, in itself, trifling, is that which has resulted from the theory of what is called “plenary inspiration;” meaning by this an inspiration extending to matters quite unconnected with Religion,—and

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Scripture, of
verbal inspi-
ration.*

* See pamphlet on *The Church and the Universities*.

extending also to the very *words* employed, so as to imply that those whom we call the Sacred Writers, were literally no more than mere *Writers*, putting down the exact words that had been dictated to them; instead of being Men who recorded in their own language the information which had been supernaturally communicated to them,—and that only as far as *Religion* is concerned. And some, perhaps, who do not believe this, think it right to connive at, or encourage this belief among the mass of the people, for fear of what is called “unsettling their minds.” But persons of even no extraordinary acuteness, will be likely to reflect that if this verbal inspiration be needful as an adjunct of a Revelation, there must be need of an infallible guidance to ascertain precisely what the words *are* which were thus divinely dictated.* Yet it must be well known that there are in many hundred instances, various readings of Scripture; and that the student is left, in each instance, to judge for himself which is to be preferred. Moreover, according to the above hypothesis, it would be needful that the words of each *Translation* also should be divinely inspired, so as to make it, in fact, an Original. And yet we know that all translations do not agree with each other. And I need

* And further still, what was the exact sense in which those words were understood when written: for, in process of time, words and modes of speech are apt to pass into new meanings and uses, different from their original intention.

hardly observe that it is through translations alone that the greater part of Mankind can be instructed in Scripture.

I have known an instance however of a person maintaining that the mass of the people ought to be left, or led, to believe, either that our Authorized Version was the original,* or that it is inspired and infallible; though our Translators were so far from

* The following is an extract from the Report of Evidence given before a Parliamentary Committee on Irish National Education:—

“I should object in general to any Version different from our own, without inquiring into the question whether it was faithfully translated or not; because I conceive that when you give the Scriptures to a child, you present him with the Word of God; and you should tell him that you are presenting him with an infallible guide; and that anything that shakes his opinion in that guide, so far mars the purposes for which you have given the Book; and I cannot conceive anything to do that more effectually than a diversity of Translation of the Scriptures.”—[Lords, p. 582.]

[Mr. Wyse.] “Are you aware that the Version of the Psalms used in the Church-services is very different from that to be found in the Authorized Version? [*Ans.*] I am.—Do you not think the child who hears them recited in the Church, and afterwards reads them in the Authorized Version in school, will naturally notice this difference of version? [*Ans.*] I do not think there is one child in a thousand who knows of the existence of the difference, or ever has read the Authorized Version in the Bible; they read it in the Prayer-Book. I am ready to go further, and say, I am very sorry there *are* two versions; I am very sorry that one was not altered at the time the Gospels and the Epistles were; but I do not see why, because there is this difference, that you should extend it.—Should this difference be perceived by the child, do you think any injury would arise from it? [*Ans.*] I should think that a very troublesome question to answer to any child.—So that it is a matter of contingency only, depending upon the capacity of the child, his acuteness, and opportunities, whether his mind may not be injured by this difference of Version? [*Ans.*] I think it can be explained to the child; but the fewer points of that kind there are to be explained to the child, I think so much the better.” [Commons, 2248, 2251.]

making any such pretension, that they themselves have in many instances recorded their doubts, by giving one rendering in the Text, and another in the Margin.

Denial of the divine authority of Scripture. § 5. It is true that the various readings and various versions, do not at all affect the general drift of the christian instruction contained in our Scriptures; but they overthrow the hypothesis of verbal inspiration. And that overthrow has led, by a violent reaction, to a denial of all divine Authority to our Scriptures, and in fact to the total subversion of anything that can be called a Revelation. The rejection of the Old Testament is not, indeed, always accompanied by a denial, in express words, of the claims of the New Testament; but it virtually implies it. For, that any one should seriously believe that he knows more than Jesus of Nazareth did, of God's dealings with his people, and yet should be sincere in professing to believe that that same Jesus was a divine Messenger, seems utterly incredible, except under the supposition of insanity. True it is that the inconsiderate will often hastily admit something that at the first glance appears plausible, and will at once reject what seems intrinsically improbable, without pausing to reflect what consequences that admission or that rejection will necessarily lead to. But there is a limit to this kind of rashness, when it does not amount to complete insanity. No one, surely, in

his senses, could really think that the God of Truth would send an inspired Prophet into the World, who should confirm people in their belief of a foolish legend intimately connected with their Religion;—a Prophet who should use such words as—“Moses wrote of me; and if ye believe not his Writings, how shall ye believe my Words?”—when, in truth, the pretended Writings of Moses are entitled to no credit whatever.

And again, if any one professing to believe Scripture, maintains, as some have done, that there was no *Gift of Tongues* at the Day of Pentecost,—that *Greek* was the Mother-tongue of all Nations; and that the Words which the Disciples spoke, in a fit of enthusiastic excitement, were merely an unusual and high-flown style of Greek,—he cannot wonder if he is suspected of trying an experiment on the credulity of his readers. That Men speaking sundry different Dialects of Greek, should admire, as something very eloquent, discourses in a strange and florid style, of which, accordingly, they could understand little or nothing, is perhaps far from unnatural; but that they should, all and each, recognize it, as their *own* tongue wherein they were born, is something harder to be believed than anything recorded in Scripture. The marvel which we do find related as occurring on the Day of Pentecost is every way far less strange than that which has been invented for the purpose of explaining it away.

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§ 6. The rejection of that miracle, and of many others, has doubtless been encouraged by the rash language of some enthusiasts who speak of such events as occur at the present day in terms appropriate to those that are miraculous; and thus put a weapon into the hands of Infidels, which these are not slow to employ. There are some, as is well known, who profess to speak as they are “moved by the Spirit;” which is precisely the description given of the Disciples on the Day of Pentecost. There are some who describe themselves as speaking “with demonstration of the Spirit and of power,”—an expression in which the Apostle Paul is evidently referring to his display of sensible miracles, as the signs of an Apostle. And in reference to the religious Revivals which have of late taken place, persons have openly proclaimed their conviction that we were really in the midst of the time prophesied by Joel, when “your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, and your young men shall see visions.”

When these and similar pretensions to what in fact amounts to miraculous agency, are put forth, we need not wonder that Rationalists should step forward, (as, accordingly they have) saying—“All this is just what was done by the first promulgators of Christianity. Any remarkable event, they called a Miracle; just as you do. Like you, they considered as a divine revelation, or direction from

above, any strong conviction or strong impulse. Their miracles are only poetically-coloured pictures of such things as are taking place around us. Their inspiration—their guiding inward light—was only those vivid impressions, and those grand designs, which are common to you with them. Both cases are alike miraculous or non-miraculous. And in both, the belief in the Miracle is not the *cause*, but the effect of the reception of the doctrine.

I may add, that the evil I have been adverting to, is very much fostered by the careless practice, of persons who have no wrong intention, of applying the terms “providential” and “miraculous” to any narrow escape from danger, or other remarkable occurrence: as if God’s providence did not extend to all the affairs of the World, but only to some exceptional events. Not that such is, usually, the real meaning of most of those who employ such language; but the unthinking are apt to forget that, since the very object of language is to distinguish one thing from another, the designation of some rare and remarkable events as providential, conveys the idea that ordinary occurrences are *not* providential,—that a safe voyage, for instance, which is not called providential, is less the gift of God’s providence, than a wonderful escape from shipwreck.

This kind of language, which is but too common, has therefore a manifest tendency to confound the miraculous with the non-miraculous, and ultimately to bring down the former to the level of the latter.

The result has been, as might have been anticipated, that the so-called Rationalists have undertaken to explain away all the Scripture Narratives of Miracles, as merely somewhat highly-coloured records of ordinary occurrences, or, in some cases, of rather curious accidents.

Various cases of re-actions. § 7. Numerous other instances might be given of the kind of danger which I have been adverting to. For in truth the history of re-actions would be in a great degree the history of human affairs. Thus, the claim to Authority on behalf of a Church, pushed to an unwise extreme, led to a revolt against all Church-Authority, and to the prevalence of various irregularities. This, again, brought about a movement in the opposite direction, terminating, in many instances, in secession to the Church of Rome; and in many more instances, introduced into our own Church, Romish principles and practices. This last movement, again, produced a re-action towards the prevalence of total Infidelity, or something nearly approaching to it; in those very localities, especially, in which that movement had originated.

This result, indeed, I took occasion distinctly to predict a good many years before it actually took place. I foresaw and foretold that the exaltation of supposed Church-traditions to a level with the Scripture,—the disparagement of the employment of Reason in matters connected with Religion,

—and above all, the system of what is called “Economy” or “double-doctrine,” must lead before long, (as in fact it *has* led) to a more or less open rejection of the Gospel.

On more than one recent occasion I endeavoured, as you will doubtless remember, to show the desirableness of introducing, in a regular way, and under competent Authority, some small alterations into our Church-services, and also into the Authorized Version of Scripture. The need of some Ecclesiastical Government invested with this competent Authority, and consisting exclusively of Members of our Church, is a point to which, as you will recollect, I endeavoured to call attention on several occasions a good many years ago, when there were very few who agreed with me; though now there is a general concurrence on this point.

And to introduce some such alterations as I have alluded to, would be fully in accordance with the principles laid down in the admirable Preface to our Book of Common Prayer. It is remarkable that the pertinacity with which this has been resisted, was complained of by the illustrious Bacon in his own time. He urges that this excessive and unwise dread of alteration, is as unreasonable as if any one should maintain that though houses and castles require repair from time to time, Churches and Chapels are buildings that can never need any. And in another place he remarks very justly, that a bigoted adherence to what is established, has no

less tendency to lead to disturbances, than rash innovation itself.

Results of excessive dread of Change. § 8. This observation appears to have received confirmation in our own time. Proposals have been put forth for such a thorough re-modelling of our Formularies, as would amount, or at least would be generally considered to amount, to an entire subversion of some of the doctrines of our Church. And such proposals (as I remarked in a recent Charge) raise up the greatest obstacle to any moderate and well-considered change; by creating an alarm not altogether without reason, against the beginning of any, even the smallest, change; as being merely the prelude to a complete revolution. And thus these two opposite extremes act and react on each other. The pertinacious opposition to any, even well-considered, modification, has led to an impatient craving for violent and fundamental changes; and this, again, has, as I have just observed, increased the dread of any even moderate change.

Attachment to the Authorized Version. § 9. Again the clamour which of late is not unfrequently heard, for a total rejection of the Authorized Version, and the substitution of a completely new one,—this has been fostered by, and in turn tends to foster, that over-zealous and almost idolatrous veneration for our present Version, which forbids the gradual introduction from time to time even

of the smallest and most obvious improvements and such as no one could deny to *be* improvements, called for either by the changes in our own language or by the establishment of preferable readings, or of more correct rendering.*

The dread of dangerous innovations, though not in itself unreasonable, has in this case been carried to such a faulty extreme as is not unlikely to lead to those very innovations.

But evils even still more serious have resulted from an excessive and unwise attachment to our Authorized Version. There is, as you are well aware, a kind of rivalry between that and the Douay Version which is in the hands of the Roman Catholics; and though both versions contain all the essentials of Christianity (indeed I do not know of any Translation whatever that does not), some Protestants were so unwise as to denounce the Douay Version altogether, representing it as utterly unfaithful. This afforded an occasion to the Romish Priests to represent what they call the Protestant Bible as purposely falsified in order to support our doctrines. This injudicious proceeding, however, is much less common now than formerly. And it appears, I may add, to be more perceived now than formerly, that the general agreement among different translations made by distinct and sometimes rival Churches, furnishes a

* See Hall's *Companion to the New Testament*; and Booker's *Obsolete Words*.

decisive and satisfactory proof to the mass of Mankind, (who, of course, cannot study Scripture in the Original) that they cannot have been imposed upon by any conspiracy among the learned. The several translations are so many independent witnesses, mutually confirming each other's testimony.

In order to keep clear of the above-mentioned rivalry, the Irish Education Board, as you are doubtless well aware, published, for the use of the National Schools, a large portion, both of the Old and of the New Testaments, in a new translation, not strictly following either of the former versions. This obtained the unanimous sanction of all the Commissioners, both Protestant and Roman Catholic. And the Publication comprised (besides a large portion of the Old Testament) the entire Gospel of Luke, and the whole Book of the Acts. The sanction thus given to such a work to be employed for the purposes of united education, was an event which surpassed my most sanguine hopes. But unhappily an unwise over-reverence for our Authorized Version led a large proportion of Protestants to decry the work, and oppose the use of it. Most industriously did they exercise their ingenuity in finding objections against the version;*

* One of the objections which was repeatedly put forward at public meetings, was, that an important passage in Luke's Gospel had been wholly omitted, by way of compromising a dispute which had arisen among the Commissioners, whether "Repent," or "Do penance," should be the rendering adopted. And of the many hundreds who believed and circulated this report, few or none took the

objections certainly not more numerous or more plausible than those which have been often brought against our Authorized Version, or than the objections, long since refuted, which have been of late revived, against the original Scriptures themselves. It is always unwise, and most especially so in these days, to foster in men the habit of at once rejecting everything against which some specious objections may be urged.

Besides other objections, however, the work was even denounced as a mutilation of Scripture; as if the Bible were *one* book, instead of being a collection of several distinct books; and were a book which children at school had been accustomed to read all through.

§ 10. The ultimate result, however, of this opposition has been the virtual suppression of the work; a measure which could never have been carried but for that opposition.

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Thus was neglected and finally lost, an opportunity which no one could have calculated on beforehand as likely to offer, and which no one can

trouble to look into the book itself, to see whether it had any foundation in truth; it being in reality an entire fabrication. And of the party who invented and who circulated this calumnious falsehood, no one, as far as I know, has expressed any regret or shame.

Another objection which I remember hearing brought forward, related to the omission of the division into chapters and verses. It was urged that these are believed by the mass of the people to be the work of the Sacred Writers themselves; and that to undeceive them might unsettle their minds.

expect ever to return;—a golden opportunity for diffusing among the great mass of the Irish people such an amount of scriptural knowledge as they had never had hitherto, nor are ever likely to have hereafter. If it be true, as is generally believed, that a large proportion of Romanists dread, as unfavourable to their system, the general diffusion of Scripture-knowledge, though they are very unwilling openly to admit this, with what alarm these persons must have seen the Books I have been speaking of, placed, with the sanction of rulers of their own Church, in the hands of hundreds of thousands of the youth of their communion; and with what wondering exultation must they have seen the scheme defeated through the agency of Protestants! Of all the wonders (and they are not few or small) which have appeared in the last half-century, this will probably be accounted by our posterity as the most marvellous. They will regard it as a thing above all others strange and unaccountable, that when an opening was afforded for imparting to Roman Catholics as well as to Protestants,—under the sanction of Roman Catholic Ministers, a large amount of Scriptural instruction,—an amount which probably would have led most of them, in after years, to the study of the entire Bible,—this work should have been strenuously and perseveringly opposed, and finally defeated by Protestants; and that a whole generation, and probably all future generations, should

have been thus consigned to unscriptural darkness, through the efforts of persons zealous (though unwisely zealous) in the cause of scriptural instruction. This, I say, will probably be regarded hereafter as the greatest of all the wonders of the present age.

It is the part of a wise man to view the scenes and the transactions around him, just as they *will* be viewed by ordinary men a century hence. Not that the men of each successive generation are necessarily wiser than their forefathers; but their prejudices and errors will be *different*; and they will take a clear and just view of mistakes no greater perhaps than some others into which they themselves may have fallen.

Even now, however, it is probable that there are many who regret the course that was pursued, even of those who at the time approved of it. But this regret is not likely to be by most of them openly proclaimed; partly from a natural reluctance to acknowledge an error; and partly, perhaps, from a conviction that the opportunity rejected has been lost for ever, and that regret comes too late to be of any practical benefit.

§ 11. It is not, however, too late, even now, to effect something in the cause of popular education, though far less than was apparently within our reach several years ago. We may yet be able, as it were, to obtain one Sibylline book at the price which *three*

*Duty of
our Clergy.*

would have cost some time back. And when we cannot do all that we could wish, we should yet strive to do all that is possible. The system, accordingly, pursued at Trinity College, Dublin, is, as is well known, to impart secular instruction to all its members, of whatever persuasion; and religious instruction to all who will accept it; but to force it on none. And it seems but fair to proceed on the same principle in our dealings with our poorer countrymen. To force people to receive true religious instruction, is what we have no power to accomplish, and no right to attempt; but it is something gained if the mass of the people are enabled to read a copy of the Bible when put into their hands; and where but very few have this power, the circulation of useful Books is of course of small avail. Something, again, is gained, if the children are taught to read from books at least not positively pernicious. And something more is also gained by the diffusion of useful secular instruction. It is indeed a truth often elaborately proved, and ostentatiously proclaimed, though it has never been disputed, that mere secular knowledge, and mere intellectual culture, do not constitute a complete and sufficient education; any more than the ploughing and manuring of a field are sufficient culture without sowing it with good seed; but these prepare the land for the reception of the seed. And even so it is with education; gross ignorance and want of exercise of the rational powers leave the

mind as it were untilled, unfitted for the reception of truth, and prepared to adopt the most absurd superstitions.

§ 12. We are bound, therefore, to do our utmost to obtain for the mass of the population, if not the best conceivable education, at least the best that they can be brought to accept.

Disadvantage to which an established Church is exposed.

And to this the Clergy are doubly bound, not only as being their fellow-creatures and fellow-subjects, but also as being Ministers of an Endowed Church under the sanction of the State; which may be considered as thus committing to their care the moral and spiritual welfare of their people, as far as this can be promoted without oppressive encroachments on liberty.

Judicious efforts, therefore, on our part in that direction, besides being, we may trust, in themselves acceptable to our divine Master, have a tendency to strengthen the position of the Established Church, as such. For we must never forget that an Established and Endowed Church such as ours, is regarded (and not altogether unfairly) as thence liable to a certain peculiar responsibility.

And I may add, that a Church so situated has, besides the benefits thence accruing, certain peculiar disadvantages also, which ought not to be overlooked.

One of these disadvantages I will, in conclusion, briefly notice.

An Established Church is likely always to number among its nominal members a large proportion of the lukewarm and indifferent. Those who think little or nothing about any religion at all, will usually be content to swim with the stream, and to profess whatever religion is established; partly as a matter of fashion, and partly because they are thus saved from pecuniary expenditure. And hence many well-disposed and pious persons, but who are inaccurate thinkers, are apt to conclude that there is some intrinsic inferiority in the Church itself which is dishonoured by such lukewarm members; and that there must be more pure Christianity in the system of some Sect, most of whose members exhibit greater zeal. Yet the fact may perhaps be, that if that Sect and the Established Church were to change places, their respective proportions of the zealous and of the lukewarm would be reversed. Yet all this is overlooked by many well-meaning and zealous, but inconsiderate persons: and they hastily join some Sect, Alliance, or Party, which under some specious title, holds out promises of a purity and perfection unattainable here below.

The disadvantage I have been adverting to is one which cannot, from the nature of the case, be completely removed, but the danger arising from it may, I think, be lessened, by clearly and fully setting it before your people, and taking occasion to remind them from time to time, that Christianity

itself has been exposed to most unfair objections from infidels, on account of the careless lives of many professed Christians:—and to exhort them to judge fairly of the doctrines and of the system of our Church by viewing these as they are in themselves, and in their own natural and proper tendency; and not from the conduct and character of those careless professors whose adherence to the Church is merely a matter of fashion and convenience.

THE END.

A CHARGE.

